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General Assembly
Fiftieth Session

Official Records

107th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 16 April 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Abibi (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/847)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance on its twelfth meeting (A/50/525)

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/50/926)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.69)

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): This morning the Assembly will continue its plenary meetings devoted to public administration and development. I call on Mr. Aleksei Yemelyanov, President-Rector of the Russian Academy for Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Yemelyanov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): As others have done, I wish to thank the United Nations for paying such great attention to the question of public administration and development, which is a requirement of our existence.

In today's world, many global problems can be resolved only through the efforts of all States in the international community. In the dynamic development of each country, problems arise that require Member States and their administrations to make new efforts and adopt new approaches. This applies to all countries, including Russia.

I would like to stress one fundamental issue relating to the problems faced by Russia and, to a certain extent, by all former socialist countries. All countries go through certain transitional stages in their development, but in these countries certain basic values are being maintained, especially with respect to property, entrepreneurship and the spiritual values of society. In Russia and in other former socialist countries those values were, for decades, kept in the background. Now Russia is faced with specific new problems in its transition to the norms of civilized society.

Russia has gone through major upheavals in the course of the twentieth century. The State system, the social order and the political order have changed twice. Though the country's economy has been seriously weakened, our people's determination, courage, traditions, and strong belief in the future have made it possible for Russia to come back to life, and we are absolutely certain that Russia is now doing so.

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At present Russia is consistently implementing profound political and economic reforms. It has created a legal and institutional basis for the promotion and protection of human and civil rights and freedoms. For the first time in its history, Russia is initiating major transformations in circumstances of civil peace, through the free expression its citizens' will.

As enshrined in its Constitution, which was adopted in a nationwide referendum, the Russian Federation is a democratic, federal State of law with a republican form of government. The State authority in Russia, which is divided into legislative, executive and judiciary branches, is vested in the President of the Russian Federation, the Federal Assembly and the Government and courts of the Russian Federation.

It must be admitted that the establishment of a new State system in Russia is a painful process. It is of critical importance that the unity and integrity of the Russian Federation have been preserved during the reform process. The process of building federal relations has generally been quite successful, though somewhat restrained. We can now say that the hardest period of reform in Russia is behind us. We have gone through a critical period during which, by necessity, living standards declined and the foundation of a new society with a market economy, based on law, was established. The philosophy of the people and the ideology of the economic system have changed.

Even under the Government of Mikhail Gorbachev, private property and entrepreneurship were considered subversive and were not dealt with in the implementation of legislation. Having been a Deputy during the Gorbachev period, I can attest to that fact. Since then, a stable class of property-holders has emerged, and now even communist programmes include concepts of entrepreneurship and private property. Although some changes may take place in the balance of political forces, they will not be radical. However, adjustments and corrections will be made. Our people now enjoys freedom. All these developments reflect the fact that movement towards democratization and reform in Russia is irreversible. There is no turning back.

As President Yeltsin has repeatedly stressed in his campaigns, we are in a new stage of Russia's transition, posing new problems for our State and its bodies. This has raised certain questions. It is very important to determine the extent of the State's participation in resolving all the problems relating to the country's development in the face of these radical transformations.

In this context, it is important that there be a division of power between the centre and the regions and a balance between the State sector and the actions of free, private market mechanisms. Previously, there were extremes in this area, ranging from extreme centralization within regions to excessive federal sovereignty. A reformed role for the State in the economic system is being worked out, mistakes are being corrected and extremes moderated. Other reform issues are also being addressed.

With regard to the determination of various forms of property, our approach to privatization and our policy on determining the income levels of different population groups, I wish to stress that our policy is based on the principle that it is better for different sectors of the population to have different living standards, with wealth stimulating entrepreneurship, than to have, as in the past, overall equality at a level of virtual poverty. Now the income differences between various sectors of the population are perceived to be unjustified, and efforts have been made to even them out through tax policies and social support for needy people who are unable to earn enough under current market conditions. All these initiatives are reflected in Russia's national report submitted to the United Nations.

At this stage in the reform process there is a great need for an effective civil service, and our Federal Assembly and President Boris Yeltsin are paying close attention to its development. In a 1993 decree the President approved the regulations on the federal civil service, and in 1995 the Federal Assembly adopted a law on the basic principles of the civil service of the Russian Federation. This was followed up by a number of presidential decrees and other legislation.

We admit that all is not yet in order in this area. For the time being, the Russian Federation's civil service lacks consistency and a system-based approach. The scientific foundation of the civil service is weak. The functions of different branches of the civil service at the federal and regional levels have not been properly apportioned, and job descriptions for civil servants at every level have not been clearly laid out. We are currently addressing those problems.

There are many personnel problems as well. Many people involved in public administration lack expertise in the area. We are working on these problems, taking into account, as we will continue to do, the recommendations made at the regional and interregional conferences, as

well as those of the United Nations Experts on Public Administration and Finance. The reports of the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts provide a solid basis for the discussion of such issues. On the whole, we agree with the way the reports define the factors underlying the trends in the development of a public adminstration system, such as increasing interdependence in the world economy; breakthroughs in high technology and informatics; a larger role for the private sector and non-governmental organizations; transnationalization of capital markets, production and services; and a conceptual transition to a model of environmentally sustainable and socially oriented development.

We assess positively the activities of the United Nations in the field of public administration, in the framework of the United Nations programme in public administration and finance as well as in the activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in this area. UNDP has contributed significantly to the solution of practical problems associated with the development and enhancement of national capacity-building in European countries and countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia, in the field of public administration, parliamentary activities, human rights, foreign aid coordination, promotion of foreign investments, military conversion, financial management, development of small and medium businesses and environmental protection.

We are in favour of enhancing this sector of the United Nations system and of giving due attention to the needs of countries with economies in transition. A number of recommendations by the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts deserve support. They include the establishment within the United Nations of a global information centre to deal with this subject, the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations in the field of research and advisory services, technical assistance to strengthen institutions of public administration and democracy, private sector development, privatization, conversion of military production, the creation of national and regional civil servant training centres and the improvement of inter-agency coordination in the field of public administration.

It is crucially important that UNDP and IBRD continue to play an active role in strengthening national capacity-building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the field of public administration.

I am sure that the discussion of the problems of public administration and development at this session will help us all to better understand international experiences in this sphere and for each country to draw adequate and useful conclusions.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call on Her Excellency Mrs. Juliette Bonkoungou, Minister for the Civil Service and Administrative Modernization of Burkina Faso.

Mrs. Bonkoungou (Burkina Faso) (*interpretation from French*): I am especially honoured to speak at this resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on the subject of public administration and development. The Government of Burkina Faso welcomes this resumed session because it reflects our concern to establish a public service which favours development as a means of achieving stability and social peace.

To our mind, history will remember the late 1990s has having been marked by four major developments. The first is the technology boom, especially in the area of communications: today's "information super-highway" and human contact not only with the Moon but with many other heavenly bodies. The second is the end of the cold war — but with the resurgence or persistence of many conflicts around the world, with their attendant problems of famine and disease and with refugee populations wandering from place to place. Third is the persistence of underdevelopment, in spite of the large amounts of money made available as official development assistance. The final development is the persistence of poverty and the emergence of unprecedentedly severe poverty and unemployment — at a time when a "post-development" era is being discussed.

This situation makes it harshly imperative that States to adopt the strategy of directing and protecting society, safeguarding the environment, pursuing relevant macroeconomic and macro-institutional policies, and ensuring social welfare and fairness.

Several questions arise here. Can it be that there are problems of public administration that have been incorrectly identified or not identified at all? Has reform been properly defined and addressed in the field of public administration? Why have the national capacities of developing countries remained immature even after 30

years of aid and financing? There are many questions. But the answer, in part, is that the growing demand for the State to regulate society, develop macroeconomic and macro-institutional policies, promote social equity and protect the environment has been accompanied by many theories promoting the privatization — indeed the ultimate disappearance — of the State and of State administration. This sometimes creates confusion at the highest level of authority. Studies by prominent specialists have authoritatively shown that the social and political upheavals and economic crises that followed independence in Africa, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, can be largely attributed to the shortcomings, dysfunction and lack of regulation of public institutions.

Here, Burkina Faso would support any endeavour to find a new approach to achieving excellent, effective administration. That is why we welcome the Assembly's consideration of the item entitled "Public administration and development". My delegation will contribute to the debate by speaking about Burkina Faso's experiences in the area of reform and of our current prospects, and about our expectations for this session.

There have been three principal stages in Burkina Faso's experience in the area of reform, corresponding to different approaches to administration. These reflect two different concepts of the role of the State. The first stage, from 1974 to 1989, was marked by a statutory approach that placed reform of personnel statutes at the centre. This reduced public service to a matter of administration, while it is but one of its components. This first approach to reform concentrated on personnel statutes, and quickly revealed its limits.

The second phase was based on reducing the costs of the functioning of public administration. It was closely linked to our structural adjustment programme, and began in the early 1990s. Here, reform efforts were aimed primarily at restoring macroeconomic balance, the breakdown of which had been attributed, *inter alia*, to the fact that payroll had grown too quickly, leaving little for capital investment. The measures involved personnel cuts, a promotion freeze in the civil service, and limiting recruitment to priority sectors.

This approach to reform did not yield all the expected results, and in 1991 the third stage began; here we opted for a comprehensive approach to reform with the creation of a Ministry for Public Administration and Modernization. This third stage, now under way, is intended to be comprehensive, integrated and systemic. It has two phases. The first is basically centred on enhancing effectiveness, with the adoption of a plan of action for modernization taking into account all the elements of the system of governance. We are seeking here to strengthen the authority and relevance of the State by refocusing its role on its fundamental missions, which include the exercise of sovereignty, improving regulation and monitoring, strengthening democracy, and improving transparency and accountability.

Our achievements to date have involved the management of human resources and structural elements, involving primarily personnel management through the creation of computerized files, carrying out large-scale training activities, and engaging in a major organizational programme for all ministerial departments and institutions.

In the area of financial management, we have acted to reform our system of public bidding, computerize public expenditure records, and reorganize national structures for collecting and processing statistical data. And in the social sphere, we have completed a study profiling poverty. For submission to the third round table of donors to the fund for Burkina Faso, at Geneva, we have prepared a letter of intention with respect to sustainable human development.

In the sphere of administrative democracy, we have created several administrative councils for ministerial sectors and hold an annual conference on public administration, which allows us periodically to take stock of administrative activities with the participation of worker representatives. All these elements are now complemented by the guidance of our Head of State, His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, who, in a statement on the anniversary of our country's independence, said,

> "In our comprehensive approach we must set up a coherent system of governance, involving transparency in political and administrative activity linked to a realistic but promising economic programme of action. For us, good governance should be a goal and a means of development, guaranteeing full participation by all in national development. The lesson to be drawn from various sectoral consultations is that we must establish a national plan of good governance."

In line with that statement, a number of days of reflection on governance have been held, which have enabled us better to form our concept of development in

Burkina Faso and the institutional framework for it. In the area of strengthening democracy, for example, the national debate has led to the grouping of political parties with a view to simplifying the political landscape, thus encouraging development.

In order to seek greater transparency, we plan to strengthen our key institutions: the Assembly and the judicial system. Pressure groups and lobbying groups such as consumer associations and human rights groups are also involved in the consultations. Moreover, we are placing special emphasis on traditional African values. There will be a study enabling feedback on the results to be taken into account in the promotion of public administration for development, for we have seen African societies striking a unique balance between individual and collective values, between competition and solidarity. Our goal is to establish systems, methods and practices of public management that are in accordance with standard wisdom, but also politically and socially acceptable and feasible in a Burkina Faso context.

The Government of Burkina Faso's activities in the framework of this new comprehensive view of public administration reform have been based primarily on lessons learned from the inadequate results of partial reform efforts.

We acknowledge the technical support of our development partners, including the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and Canadian and French agencies, to name only a few. We have also benefitted from subregional cooperation through organizations such as the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development and the Observatoire des functions publiques africaines.

Hence, on the basis of our own experience with devising and implementing reforms and on our participation in the discussion of administrative issues through such bodies as the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance, over whose twelfth meeting I had the honour to preside, my country has become increasingly convinced that subregional, regional and international cooperation in the field of public administration should be enhanced in order to support our efforts to effect change.

I am grateful to our partners, whom I have already mentioned, in particular those within the United Nations system, for their multifaceted support for our reform efforts. We support the recommendations of the Group of Experts, particularly regarding the following elements: an effective United Nations presence in the various areas of public administration, with a view to helping States in their reform efforts; including the item "Public administration and development" on the regular agendas of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council, to give it its proper place at the heart of the development debate; resumption and strengthening of the United Nations role as the depository for innovative information on public administration, and development of its role as a centre for the exchange of experiences; strengthening the key role of the United Nations and the United Nations programme in public administration and finance in assistance to and reorientation of public services; and encouraging developing countries to adopt bold measures of support for national efforts and subregional bodies in the field of administrative reform, and pursuit of United Nations efforts to mobilize funds to help Governments implement their social development programmes.

I hope that, for all the countries present at this session, and certainly for my country, the conclusions that will emerge will provide a new basis for more comprehensive, deeper and more coherent administrative reforms. These conclusions could be a starting point for us to improve our capacity for analysis and integrate it into regional and subregional structures in order to make better use of our experiences for development.

I cannot conclude without expressing a special thought about peoples in conflict, the destruction of whose economies has been accompanied by the disintegration of administrative structures. I share their hope that the international community will be able to enhance its support for their post-conflict efforts to rehabilitate and reconstruct their States.

I hope for the complete success of the work of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. Long live international cooperation! Long live the United Nations!

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I call next on His Excellency Mr. Luiz Carlos Bresser Pereira, Brazilian Minister of Federal Administration and Reform of the State.

Mr. Pereira (Brazil): I wish to congratulate the sponsors of the important initiative to resume the fiftieth session of the General Assembly to consider the item "Public administration and development" under the wise and competent presidency of Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, underscored yesterday the many challenges faced by developing countries in reforming their public sectors and in overcoming growing difficulties faced despite new national and global support for the efforts of those countries to improve public administration, in particular by the United Nations programme in public administration and finance and through activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

I understand that the United Nations had initially planned to hold not a special series of General Assembly meetings — which we are very pleased to be having — but a world conference like the other major conferences held in recent years. Ultimately this proposal was not accepted, especially by developed countries. I asked myself why this happened. There are two possible answers. The first would be that the subject is not relevant enough to justify a big special conference. The second would be that there are no new ideas that would justify such a conference.

Reading the report of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance that serves as background for these meetings, I came to the conclusion that it is a very competent document, but a rather old one. The proposals it makes are old proposals, bureaucratic proposals. They speak of enhancing public-policy development capacity. They speak of strengthening financial management. They speak of developing human resources. They speak of improving efficiency. There is consensus about all these things; there is nothing new about any of them. For that reason, the developed countries were not interested in having a large conference. If there had been new ideas, given the enormous relevance that public administration and, more broadly, the reform of the State have been accorded in recent times, maybe there would have been a larger world conference.

In fact, it is not by chance that the United Nations is dealing with the reform of public administration. The reform of the State, and specifically the reform of public administration, has become a major concern of all countries in the 1990s. In Washington, the multilateral agencies — the World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development — have made reform of the State, and particularly the reform of public administration, a priority. Many countries, like mine, possess ministries with the mission of reforming the State apparatus, and in a broad sense reforming the State.

Why does the new relevance of this problem exist? I believe that there are two reasons. One reason is that in the 1980s most of our countries, including the developed countries to a lesser extent and excluding only the countries of East Asia and South-East Asia, faced a great crisis. In my view, this was a crisis of the State, or a crisis of government. It was a fiscal crisis of the State; it was a crisis in which the way in which the State intervened in the economy, and it was a crisis in the bureaucratic way in which the State was managed. These crises provoked the economic crisis, or in the developed countries a lower rate of growth compared with the decades following the Second World War.

There were three responses to this crisis.

One was the populist response: to ignore the crisis and continue with the old statist and populist policies.

The second was the neoconservative strategy: it proposed a minimal State, reducing it to a very small entity. But soon this second alternative proved unrealistic. It offered some good and relevant ideas and critiques, but the proposal was not viable. Besides, to reduce the State to a minimal entity in contemporary capitalism is impossible.

The third alternative, the only one possible, was to reform or rebuild the State. What was needed was a linear, much more efficient, citizen-oriented State. Costs had to be cut to help the process of fiscal adjustment, while efficiency had to increase in order to help citizens, who are the clients.

These kinds of ideas made public administration very important. A second reason for its importance was the increasing concern that had emerged in the developing and the developed countries about "rent-seeking". Rent-seeking is the appropriation of the State by private interests. In Brazil, the Left calls rent-seeking — a word invented by the Right — the privatization of the State, but they are the same thing. Both are concerned about protecting the public patrimony against greedy people and greedy interest groups.

Democracy has been the main tool for safeguarding the public patrimony, through a bureaucratic public administration in conjunction with a good system of protection. But this is no longer enough. In Brazil, since Fernando Henrique Cardoso became President, there have been developments with regard to public administration. An amendment to the Constitution is currently being discussed that would give it flexibility,

allowing the administration to change from a bureaucratic public administration to a managerial public administration.

In addition, we have published a White Paper on the reform of the State apparatus, a White Paper which has also been issued in English. In it we diagnose the situation, showing how some elements of patrimonialism still remain in Brazil; how attempts to impose a bureaucratic public administration work only to a certain extent; and how at this moment the major objective is to make the transition from a bureaucratic public administration to a managerial one.

We believe that there are three types of public administration: patrimonial, which mixes the public and private patrimony; bureaucratic, which does not do this but is very formal and concentrates on processes, not outcomes; and finally, managerial, which concentrates on outcomes and is based on management contracts, in which enormous leeway is given to the agencies while requiring them to achieve the performance indicators included in the contracts.

This kind of reform has been discussed for the last 20 or 30 years. It became particularly important when the State fiscal crisis became clearer. The first country to successfully implement reforms in this direction was the United Kingdom. New Zealand also instituted very important reforms of this type, as did Australia. The United States is trying to achieve this through the "reinventing Government" programme. In Sweden, there are also some programmes with this aim.

And now we in Brazil are headed in the same direction. To this end, we first defined a kind of framework — the three types of public administration I mentioned earlier: patrimonial, bureaucratic and managerial. In a managerial public administration, the idea is decentralization and a strengthening of the core of the State, because the core must include very competent, well-trained, well-prepared civil servants who can define the agencies' objectives and seek that these be attained. Also, the agencies must be very independent.

This kind of administration is based on a certain trust. A bureaucratic public administration is based on a total lack of trust in people, which means that each step of the administrative process must be carefully controlled. This is not the case with a managerial public administration, which takes ideas from the private sector; however, it is very clear that private administration is one thing, while public administration is another. They have different objectives, but some tenets of private administration can and should be used in its public counterpart.

An important part of this plan is the division of the State into four sectors. We believe that each State — developed or developing — has the following four sectors: first, the strategic core, where laws and policies are defined; secondly, activities exclusive to the State, involving State power, activities that only the State can perform — police, taxation, regulation, fiscal policy and subsidization; thirdly, the non-exclusive activities of the State, comprising the areas of education, health care, culture and scientific research, which it performs or subsidizes because, perhaps, they involve human rights, or perhaps because the market might not fully recompense a certain activity, so the State must intervene, though the private sector can do that as well; fourthly, and finally, there is the production of goods and services for the market.

Given these four sectors, the question is, what type of administration should one have, and what type of property ownership? In terms of administration, as I have already mentioned, a transition should be made from a bureaucratic to a managerial public administration. But in terms of property the idea is that there are only two types of property in contemporary capitalism: private property and State property, which is synonymous with public property. We believe that this is not a good division, and that there exists a third type of property, which we call public, non-State property — referred to in the United States as non-governmental property. It is public in the sense that it is devoted to the public interest, and non-State because it does not belong to the State.

For example, foundations or universities in the United States are public, non-private property. In the United States, they say that they have private and public universities, but I do not agree. I think that all their universities are public, non-State entities, though there is some difference between the ones that are said to be private and have a smaller budget and more endowment, and those that have a larger budget and less endowment.

Our proposal is as follows for each of the four sectors. In the strategic core of the State, property has to be State property. In the exclusive activities of the State, again, property has to be State property. The production of goods and services for the market should, in principle, be private; that is why privatization is taking place throughout the world. Finally, we come to the non-exclusive activities of the State — education, health,

culture and so on. In this sector, activities should not be private if they are being financed or subsidized by the State. However, neither should they be State activities, because they do not involve the power of the State. Therefore, they should be public, non-State activities.

In Brazil, to this end, we have chosen two types of institutions. In the exclusive activities of the State, where the power of the State is used, we propose to have autonomous agencies as the agents of this reform. In the non-exclusive services of the State, our proposal is to have social organizations — we invented this term — which would be public, non-State organizations, autonomous from the State, in whose management society would participate. These are the basics, but both types of institutions would be supported by the State budget and have management contracts with the strategic core.

These are the basic ideas that we are proposing in Brazil. They are not entirely new, as they are based on the experience of other countries, but I believe that they constitute a framework that merits further discussion.

The Latin American Centre for Development Administration is set to meet in Brazil at the end of the year. The Centre, of which I am the President, is a multilateral institution with headquarters in Venezuela. This large congress will take place in Rio de Janeiro in November this year. I hope that the United Nations will support it. The Inter-American Development Bank is giving it its full support, and I hope that many of those here today will also participate.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Saeed Al Ghaith, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission and Chairman of the Institute of Development Administration of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Al Ghaith (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the United Arab Emirates, to extend to Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral sincere congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly. We wish him every success.

It also gives me pleasure on this occasion to thank Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his tireless efforts to enhance the role of the international Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security, and for his increasing concern with the question of administration and development. There is no greater evidence of this than the devotion of these meetings to this vital question.

At the outset, I should also like to thank the Group of Experts which has prepared and submitted an outstanding study on public administration. This question will always be of concern to States, organizations, individuals and the entire international community, because administration is the common factor in all aspects of life. Further, seeking administrative development is necessary in view of contemporary changes.

There is no doubt that the world is according increasing interest to the question of development and administration on the regional, national and international levels. Administration has moved to the forefront of development questions because it is the engine that drives all development organizations to achieve their goals. It has become clear that administration, as a profession, requires the creative application of scientific norms. Thus its practice will always be an art, because it consists of concepts, principles, modalities, thought and vision. In sum, administration is an entire way of life.

The Charter of the United Nations was drawn up while the world was still suffering from the aftermath of war. Faced with indescribable conflicts, the leaders of the world decided to do away once and for all with war. By way of affirming their faith in the dignity of man, they decided that it was necessary to achieve advancement and development for all peoples and countries. The result was the preparation of the most important political document known to the world, with the aim of maintaining peace and affirming the concept of peace and the importance of advancement and development.

Half a century has passed since the signing of the Charter in San Francisco, and while the world has not witnessed another world war, it is facing great challenges to administration and administrative development. Therefore, there is an urgent need for us to work side by side, as States, organizations and individuals, and for us to commit ourselves to joint responsibility and efforts for development. This presupposes a coherent fabric of administrative norms and ethics. There is a direct relationship between administration and development, because development questions are based fundamentally on administration, since development is not spontaneous, but, rather, is based on the presence of an integrated, updated and sophisticated administrative system.

Hence, the presence of public administration as a distinct element of all development activities is a foregone conclusion, since economic development depends on a successful administration in the phases of policy formulation and implementation. Also, public administration plays an undeniable role in the question of social development by formulating administrative programmes aimed at narrowing the gap between what is available and what is possible in the field of social development. Also obvious is the ongoing role played by public administration in developing the private sector in such a way as to organize and stabilize it. This is the concept of participatory development, which should be affirmed in our contemporary world.

The world of the last decade of the twentieth century is witnessing numerous and successive transformations in various aspects of life, whether political, administrative, economic or social. Furthermore, the world of today no longer has any isolated islands, since evolutionary trends have become the hallmark of our world. On the political, economic and sociological levels, it has become necessary and logical for administrations to keep abreast of prospects for development and modernization. The success of this evolution and renaissance will not be easy without administrative development.

In this regard, we would like to note that our State, which was established in 1971, has seen a very high-calibre administrative evolutionary renaissance in the public and private sectors, especially in the continuous review of regulations, laws and norms. The aim is to upgrade and streamline them, to restructure all State organizations and to introduce technology into all phases of work, in order to achieve accuracy, save time and enhance the capabilities of the staff to the greatest possible extent. This renaissance was the linchpin of the economic, social, educational and environmental renaissance experienced by our fledgling State. What happened in the United Arab Emirates in this regard is noteworthy, especially since at the inception of the State in 1971, the process was very difficult. But thanks to the determination and sincere will of our wise leadership, headed by His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan; his brother, His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister; and their brothers, their Highnesses the members of the Supreme Council of rulers of the Emirates, the development of the Emirates has been achieved.

As a contribution to the desired administrative development, which leads to comprehensive development, we propose a general framework based on mechanisms for developmental cooperation between all States. One dimension of this framework is that of making the individual the main focus of development while striving for the greatest possible enhancement of human capabilities. The bases for such a framework are, first, interest in administrative training, not as an end in itself, but as an intermediate target and as a risk-free way to hasten improvements in productive efficiency and labour relations, while concentrating on the design of training programmes to bring about changes in the conduct of trainees; second, affirming that the role of administration should be humanitarian rather than mechanical and that this concept should be applied at all administrative levels; third, increasing concern with administrative technology, because it leads to the mechanization of routine administrative work and to increased production, together with decreased costs and guaranteed high levels of productive efficiency; the United Nations should play an auxiliary role through the provision of technical assistance; fourth, encouragement of specialized research to develop administrative work.

Fifth, the United Nations should facilitate the exchange of expertise between States, whether by supporting training consultancy or administrative information through the United Nations programme in public administration. Sixth, the Group of Experts should become a subsidiary of the Economic and Social Council, provided that the Group is reconstituted so as to guarantee the representation for economic and political groupings, and along lines of equitable geographical distribution; seventh, support should be provided for development cooperation between all States, especially between North and South.

Eighth, the United Nations should sponsor development projects that are of common interest to various States, especially those having to do with financial, economic, social and administrative questions, provided a strategy, including timetables, is drawn up for this target. Ninth, we recommend that each year a "citizens' service and administrative development" day should be declared, instead of the proposed "public service day", under the sponsorship of the United Nations and we believe that this should be an occasion for dealing scientifically with questions of development and advancement; tenth, the concept of developmental partnership should be introduced; eleventh, affirming the concepts of administrative decentralization should be affirmed and put into effect by means of streamlining procedures.

Twelfth, it should be taken into account that the organizational structure of administration should have a dynamic, not a static, base. Thirteenth, it should be emphasized that the employee is selected for the post, and not vice versa; fourteenth, concepts of administrative cooperation and quality should be implemented; and, fifteenth, we should accelerate the final drafting of the code of conduct for public service employees, which was dealt with at the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Assembly for its kind attention while wishing it success always. May God's peace and blessings be upon it.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Muhammad Majid, Secretary of the Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance of Bangladesh.

Mr. Majid (Bangladesh): It is indeed a great pleasure for me and my delegation to be able to attend this resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development. The Government of Bangladesh attaches great importance to this subject, as it feels strongly that an efficient and effective public administration is an essential precondition for sustainable development, and especially for the alleviation of poverty. We are therefore honoured to be a part of this process of enhancing international responsiveness to the emerging challenges in the area of public administration and development.

The 1990s present complex and difficult challenges to the public administration and finance systems of most Governments. Many are now confronted with a myriad of internal and external factors which call for a targeted and pragmatic framework for an improved institutional set-up and capacity development. The Bangladesh delegation wishes to thank the United Nations for taking an integrated approach to our common endeavour in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 49/136, on public administration and finance. The essential parameters of our work were well articulated in the President's opening statement, while the reports of the Secretary-General and of the Group of Experts have provided a comprehensive overview of the issues relating to public administration and development, as well as of the role of the Member States and the United Nations.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the Secretary-General, to the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services and to the esteemed Group of Experts, whose invaluable contributions in this uphill task have indeed provided useful groundwork for our future undertakings.

The challenges that most countries — whether industrial, developing, least developed or in economic transition — are facing today are complex and multidimensional. We live in a world of contrasts, where a fifth of the developing world's population goes hungry, while there is unprecedented affluence elsewhere and so much is wasted; where so many children do not live long enough to enjoy their childhood, while there are so many unnecessary weapons. Continuing globalization, trade liberalization and the use of market-oriented structures are being pursued, when the role of the State and the task of public administration are yet to be redefined. While the decentralization of governance and democratization have been integrated into the process of economic and social transformation, it is regrettable that the world economy is moving towards the marginalization of the low-income countries.

The desirable structure of a global arrangement should, in our view, rest on the following basic principles: first, the creation of a new vision for all aspects of development and governance; secondly, the development of an internationally accepted mechanism and strategies for the establishment of peace and security through reinforcing equity, growth and stability; and, thirdly, a process of free interaction between people and nations.

There is a growing trend towards some realignment of the relations between Governments, organs of civil society and private economic actors. In many countries, command-oriented policies, which tended to impede economic and social development, are being reduced. Paradoxically, this reduction in Governments' command function tends to increase the essential role of Governments in addressing issues which could not be addressed by either the market or civil organizations. Similarly, the experience of many countries undertaking programmes of structural adjustment has also highlighted the need for efficient State organizations to play essential roles in critical areas. Indeed, the eventual success of efforts to liberalize the market may often be seriously jeopardized by weaknesses in State and government infrastructure. In more specific terms, a strong and well-functioning Government is a precondition for, first, translating a sovereign people's wishes and demands into public policies and priorities; secondly, managing public

resources effectively and efficiently in accordance with nationally established priorities; thirdly, reforming public administration with a view to enhancing government capacity to implement policies and strategies aimed at poverty elimination and the promotion of equity; fourthly, decentralizing and devolving governance functions in order to improve utilization of public resources and participation in decision-making; and, fifthly, involving civil society in policy development and programme implementation through improved dialogue between government and civil organizations.

Governments need administrative systems that can deliver for them in the face of mounting pressures. It is not simply that the number and magnitude of the problems are overwhelming; the problems themselves are deeply interconnected, and the succession of crises is also rapid. The bureaucratic organizations are not designed to cope with the situation, and public administration therefore needs to develop flexibility, creativity and a capacity for strategic thinking and management. Programmes for change or transformation therefore needs to be orchestrated in the national strategy in proper sequence. It is equally essential to implement them effectively. As a sixteenth century philosopher rightly said,

> "c..ange is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better."

This implies that there must be continuity of leadership. In an era when change comes with bewildering rapidity, the Government must have a vision for the future.

Allow me to turn briefly to the situation in my country, Bangladesh. Strong political commitment is being forged to redress structural difficulties in development management and legal systems, decentralize governments and authority, enhance management accountability and responsibility, stimulate privatization and promote partnerships between government and civil society. Despite prolonged political difficulties in my country, there is a general consensus among all concerned about strengthening public administration and the need for greater transparency and accountability.

The role of the State is being redirected, from one of direct involvement in production to the functions of development, promotion and maintenance of an enabling framework. There has been a considerable shift in State machinery, including institutions, processes, personnel and the promotion of new skills, capacity and orientation among public officials to the changing demands. Promotional activities for private investment have led to a positive response in the private sector. The privatization of State-owned enterprises is under way. Democracy is taking root in all spheres. Our experience vividly demonstrates that without people's participation, the potential for socio-economic progress cannot be realized. Thus, we have taken a pro-people, pro-poor and pro-nature development approach in the public administration system. The setting up of efficient units, recognition of merit, skills, efficiency and competence in recruitment and promotion, greater transparency and accountability in the decision-making process, greater decentralization of the administration and performance appraisal systems in the civil service are some of our ongoing reform measures.

It is time we looked beyond the established paradigms and concentrated on some critical new strategies that emerged in the Secretary-General's report with regard to strengthening capacity and management efficiency in public administration, including, *inter alia*, public-private interaction, the role of public administration in promoting social development, developing infrastructure and environmental management and the planning, management and operation of development programmes. We are in broad consensus on the underlying themes and messages advanced by the Group of Experts at its twelfth meeting and also by the Secretary-General in his report in document A/50/847. We would, however, like to highlight certain aspects of public administration and development which we feel deserve adequate attention.

The role of the Government and public administration should be redefined, with functions such as peace, security, equity, social justice, environment and good governance to remain the essential functions of the State and public administration — the guiding principle being that the Government should withdraw from activities that others can do better. This also implies a facilitating role for the Government in creating an enabling environment for the private sector, local governments, community organizations and civil society in general.

The role of the Government in protecting the poor, the deprived and the disadvantaged should be acknowledged and strengthened.

Public administration has to play an integrative role in the face of possible social disintegration and lack of consensus in society. Conflict resolution, post-conflict

restoration and rehabilitation of society are inevitably important, particularly in turbulent areas.

The support of the international community is badly needed to cope with the demands of reforms. Attention should be given to ensuring the flow of adequate resources to protect the poor against disruptions relating to market-oriented reforms. A major constraint that will influence the role of the State is the inadequacy of development resources at its command.

Training of civil servants should receive priority attention, in order that they may adequately respond to changes.

There should be continuous interaction with the informal sector to create an enabling environment with a view to encouraging the creativity of the disadvantaged sections of the community.

The new governance paradigm calls for more education and wider dissemination and sharing of information. There is a recognition that countries should learn from each other's experience in the areas of good governance and institution-building.

The United Nations could assist in the provision of information and training, especially in the establishment of training institutions or the improvement of existing institutions dealing with governance, and in the provision of information. The United Nations could also hasten the setting up of a clearing-house on management development which could be accessed by Member countries on a regular basis.

Governments must be reassured that external contributions to development are just that, and not interference in matters that internally may be seen as sensitive.

In an effort to develop competence and leadership, some strategic initiatives could be undertaken, such as, first, building competence in the development-management aspects of governance. The United Nations system possesses a reasonable capacity in this field. Secondly, an inter-organizational forum could be established for development management and governance. There is a recognized need for this within the United Nations system. Along these lines, regional sub-forums could be established to address particular development-management themes, such as institutional building or decentralization, or regional concerns. Thirdly, regional think tanks could be strengthened for the provision of advice on development-management issues to Governments and donors. Global networks of innovators could be established and managed in such fields as decentralization, non-governmental organizations, Government-civil society links and information-sharing; and, fourthly, the decentralized-governance programme of the United Nations system could be geared up for mobilizing additional resources to implement innovative programmes for system development and provide technical assistance and capital investment to developing countries in particular.

We recognize the inevitable role of the United Nations in public administration and development and believe that a strong institutional base in the United Nations system is called for. This notwithstanding, the question of public administration as a regular item on the agenda of both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly needs further elaboration and careful thought. It might be useful to take the initiative to make the Group of Experts more effective at this juncture of the United Nations, when the operationalization of the activities of the United Nations programme in the field of public administration and development is more important. It should also be understood that national Governments should take the lead role, while the United Nations system is to offer catalytic support for capacity development, institutional strengthening, advocacy and understanding.

Let me conclude by reiterating that we are one single family with a common destiny, and we must be committed to a more prosperous global society. This resumed session should not be confined merely to heightening our awareness and indicating prescriptions: it must take concrete steps to realize goals.

Mr. Witbooi (Namibia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Acting President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Claudia Bello, Secretary of State for the Civil Service of Argentina.

Ms. Bello (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Let me express my satisfaction and personal pleasure at the opportunity to speak in this important forum. I also wish to convey to the President of the General Assembly my congratulations and those of the Government I represent on his excellent work. Under his outstanding leadership, I feel certain that our debate will lead to the most successful results.

The present offers us a political and economic environment in which each new issue of the international agenda has its own importance and sense of urgency. Furthermore, the dizzying speed of changes in mankind's modes of production and stockpiling leaves little room for reflection. Even so, the reform of the structures of the State and its most important tool, administrative reform, both central issues of this Assembly's agenda, clearly stand out because of their enormous significance.

The creation of a future in which democracy, justice and the efficiency of peoples give shape to an international order that is stable, lasting and worth inhabiting, will depend largely on the intelligence with which each of our countries performs this task and on the wisdom with which the national results of change are brought on the world scene.

Over the past three decades, since the advent of post-industrial society and especially since the recent disappearance of the paradigmatic alternative to the formula of "democracy and markets", almost all national societies on Earth have been making efforts, at great cost, to adapt to these new realities.

Much has been said about the inevitability of that effort and the irresistible demands of economic globalization. This vision does no justice, however, to the will shown in sacrifices by societies that supported and still support policies of change in the knowledge that, however bitter the immediate consequences, the sacrifice is unavoidable if they are to remain viable entities in the coming millennium.

Historically, Latin America has played a pioneering role in the debate on the problems of development. The region's initiative took shape even in the institutional context of this Organization, through the pioneering work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Since the days of that decisive contribution to the shape of the debate, its ideological and theoretical frameworks have undoubtedly changed. But a significant portion of that Latin American heritage remains relevant.

First, the need to maintain a debate on the economic and social development of peoples has not disappeared and is today even more pressing, as evidenced by today's meeting. Furthermore, a substantial part of that Latin American contribution was the adoption of the formula "development with equality", in which both elements share the same importance. Equality is not simply a possible effect, but that which gives ultimate meaning to the concept of development.

States and public administrations, beyond ideological and theoretical shifts, retain the unshirkable responsibility to fulfil that twofold objective in the near future. From this standpoint, the role of social innovators that falls to members of the civil service becomes self-evident. This is the key challenge facing our generation.

Latin America's contribution has not been limited to original ideas. During the past 15 years, the region was buffeted by crosswinds as it strove to build and sustain democratic systems, digest extremely harsh monetary discipline, accept the imposition of the rules of the world market and see its States reform themselves in ways that often seemed like an abandonment of the social process. None of this has yet prevented continental peace and the hegemony of pluralistic coexistence from remaining essentially strong and secure.

The situation gives cause for much-needed optimism, but it should not blind us to the risks we continue to face. The concentration of wealth, an inevitable result of modernization; the parallel explosions of rates of poverty and social marginalization; the emergence of the phenomenon of structural unemployment uncoupled from cycles of economic growth; and an extreme belief in market primacy which, without a strong State, could become an undesirable black market: these are some of the darkest points on our horizon.

The current moment in Latin America is critical. If some of these more negative trends should gain strength, we could see an abyss opening between State and society. The key to avoiding that gulf lies in our capacity to recognize, understand and integrate the demands, discontentments and aspirations of our societies.

There can be no coherent reform of the State — and, consequently, no development — without participation. The initial enthusiasm over the recovery of democracy in Latin America has faded. We are now facing cultural and social changes that involve a more limited and less intense form of social activism — activism that, in many cases, takes shape in ways we do not fully comprehend. It is from the State that we must encourage civic-mindedness, opening our doors to the citizen, returning to him the power he confers on us through legitimacy.

Argentina is clearly within this framework. It has participated and has surely contributed to the debate. The tradition of Argentina's concern for such issues as the reform of the State and administration can be traced back to the last century. But it is the more recent examples that are relevant here. The crisis of the model in which the State is the hub of activity came to a head late in the 1980s. The public sector, which had in the past been the most dynamic element of the economy, a motor for growth and development, gradually ran out of spending capacity, without financial backing and without the initiative to resolve the crisis in which it was the key player.

At the same time, the growing mistrust of civil society in the State's capacity to respond efficiently to its demands aggravated this crisis of the State as social manager and confirmed the obsolescence of a centralized system of economic regulation, State organization and social promotion.

The current Government assumed the responsibility of solving this enormous crisis through simultaneous processes. We re-established national unity, strengthened our institutions and stabilized the economy, thus avoiding social disintegration, while initiating structural reform of the State with the aim of salvaging its essential mission.

The Government held the view that the transformation of the State should arise from an appropriate redefinition of its size and role in society, especially in the economy. The concentration of essential functions and increased incentives in the context of a smaller but stronger public administration were the pillars of substantial improvement in the efficiency of the public sector. The most visible result of this policy was a marked improvement in organizational capabilities and administrative management.

The political objective was to make the 1990s the decade of growth. This decision required that the economy be freed from the burden of the fiscal deficit, which could be brought about only by making deep-going changes in the organization of the State, the level of public spending and the allocation of resources. This was, in sum, an integrated programme of structural reform of the public sector.

It is important to make it clear here that the Government I represent and the people that has granted it two successive mandates have not completed that task, nor will they complete those that remain, merely to create some dark utopia of a stateless society, abandoned to the primitive stage of human development in which life was brief, brutish and vile. On the contrary, President Carlos Menem has instructed his administration to move ahead towards the construction of a State of solidarity and efficiency.

The new State we are building is not a creation born in a historical vacuum. This State will preserve the best of our past, be responsive and determined in the face of the challenges of the present and look to anticipate the demands of the future. The new State will be the expression of an intergenerational commitment that, despite the awareness that perfection will always remain in the distance, seeks it none the less. It will be a new State because, when it finds itself facing a crisis — for instance, a natural catastrophe that devastates non-renewable resources — it will know that its role is not to explain such a crisis, but to respond swiftly, directly and efficiently. It will know that, if it is incapable of such a response, the bureaucratic labyrinth will make that intergenerational commitment a barren one.

The city came to embody the best aspects of the history of civilizations, a superior state of cultural evolution and development. The city was synonymous with democracy, protection from danger, artistic creation and progress. In its contemporary version — the mega-city — poverty, marginalization and abandonment often make democracy an impossible dream. The walls of the city that once protected us now crowd us and divide us, and the culture and technology that were once forces of integration are now forces of exclusion.

These problems cannot be addressed singly, as if they were whirlwinds and disturbances in a sea of calm. They are concrete examples of the challenges that public administration, as a visible expression of the State, faces today in allowing the pact between generations to continue.

Our statement is accompanied by a technical paper. I should like to take this opportunity to thank the experts of our Mission who helped to prepare it.

In conclusion, allow me to recall the old idea that, between thought and reality, there is a road that can be travelled only with the desire to do so. We want the new State to embrace equity and efficiency, and we hope that God will help us in our task.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency the Honourable E. T. S. Adriko, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Service of Uganda.

Mr. Adriko (Uganda): I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to address this Assembly on the question of public administration and development.

As is rightly observed in the two reports before us, good public administration is fundamental to the achievement of political stability and economic growth and development. At the same time, public administration as a system can thrive only in conditions of peace and stability. Because of the ever-changing understanding of the relationship of man with his surroundings — especially in his quest for sustainable livelihood — we all now agree that good public administration should be responsive to these needs and flexible enough to adapt to new challenges.

The ways in which different countries and regions will rise to these challenges will differ according to their technological, cultural, social, economic and even political setting. It is therefore not an overstatement when the Secretary-General characterizes this issue as complicated enough to warrant periodic debate in this Assembly; nor is it disproportionate to charge a group of people with the task of identifying its essential elements and recommending how national Governments, the United Nations system and the international community might help the process forward.

Allow me to share a few of our own experiences. Although substantial improvements have been made in the area of public-sector reform, further improvements are constrained by the weakness of our database on which such policy analysis could be based, as well as by the shortage of skills and the weaknesses of institutional structures. Therefore, our current and future efforts in this area should be directed at bolstering the database and strengthening both institutional and human capacities in essential areas.

In order to provide government with a different perspective on important issues and to enrich the policy debate, the process of policy analysis has been made more participatory by allowing policy to be generated by competent bodies outside the structure of government. For example, an independent economic-policy research centre has been established to raise and maintain standards of local research. The major areas identified include macroeconomic policy, agricultural policy, population policy, human-resource development and utilization, public- and private-sector management, environmental policy, industrial policy and the transfer of technology.

In Uganda, we have acknowledged the invaluable role of the private sector in economic growth and development. Government has taken a deliberate step to involve the private sector in the policy debate by soliciting the views of the private-sector associations and other non-governmental actors in the fields of manufacturing and commerce. This serves the dual objective of providing government with alternative views and at the same time contributes to the creation of a healthy business environment conducive to private-sector development. We agree with the Secretary-General's proposition that making this partnership work will require a re-tailored public administration.

Turning to the subject of improving civil-service systems in general, by the mid-1980s, because of civil strife, instability and State mismanagement, the Uganda civil service — which many observers had hailed at the time of independence as one of the best in Africa because of its efficient performance, motivation, adequate pay and equipment — had degenerated and become bloated, inefficient, unproductive, unresponsive to national needs and utterly demoralized.

In order to address these problems, and consistent with the Government's objectives and programmes aimed at building an independent, integrated and self-sustaining national economy and at the promotion of participatory and democratic governance, the Government set up the Public Service Review and Reorganization Commission 1988-1989 to examine and make recommendations on the public service with a view to instituting major reforms to make it efficient and responsive to the development needs of Uganda. In particular, the Commission was to address itself to four broad areas of concern: personnel and management issues, organizational structure, accountability, and financial management and conditions of service. The recommendations of the Commission formed the basis of the civil-service reform programme that is guiding the implementation of fundamental changes in the handling of public affairs and policy formulation in Uganda.

For strategic reasons, and because of the need to prioritize critical areas requiring immediate attention, the Government identified eight major reform components to be addressed. These are rationalization of government structures and functions, including the decentralization of powers to the districts; reductions in the size of services, including removal of ghost workers and use of voluntary retirement; enhancement of salary; monetization of non-cash benefits; personnel and establishment control; capacity-building; result-oriented management; and development of communications strategy.

The challenge is essentially to redefine the role of government in meeting the development needs of Uganda and to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in delivering these services. Towards this end, the Government of Uganda has had to put in place effective controls over public-sector employment in order to move towards providing civil servants with a living wage and attaining a stable budgetary framework. These changes were also essential for creating an institutional framework which would provide crucial incentives for changing attitudes and behaviour to those more in line with the needs of the result-oriented public sector, which is capable of adapting to changing circumstances.

The Government of Uganda considers that the attainment of these goals is feasible. I should like to highlight some of these issues and concerns.

With regard to the rationalization of Government structures and functions, the objective of the process of ministerial restructuring is to review the existing mandates, functions and staffing levels of all the Ministries and Departments, in line with the policy on the perceived role of government. The intention is to create a leaner, decentralized, better-paid and better-equipped civil service, which concentrates on the improved delivery of core services in a culture that rewards performance, honesty and a sense of public duty. With this in mind, the number of Ministers was reduced from 72 to 42. At the same time, essential services were devolved to the district level, and non-core services will be either devolved to the private sector or abandoned altogether. The task now is to ensure that this exercise is an ongoing process which anticipates changes, copes with emerging challenges and translates development consensus into practical and implementable components. The Government has accordingly established the Administrative Reform Commission as a vehicle for addressing further changes.

I turn to the subject of downsizing the civil service. As stated earlier, the other important element of the reform programme has been the downsizing component aimed at achieving an economically viable staffing level consistent with service delivery objectives and the need for better remuneration and reward in the public service. As a result of these measures, the Government has managed to reduce the size of the civil service from an initial maximum of 320,000 employees in 1990 to 140,000 by June 1995, where the number has stabilized. While we consider this reduction of 54 per cent in the number of staff members to be a major achievement, we concur with the Secretary-General's report that cost containment, downsizing, and issues of performance and effective management in human resources are difficult to put on a sustainable track unless they are viewed with a long-term perspective, and that these are issues that we should continue to address. This will certainly need cooperative efforts at all levels.

My next subject is establishment and staffing control. To ensure that proper control in establishment and staffing is maintained, it will be necessary for the Government to introduce a system-wide computerized personnel information system that will connect all arms of government and maintain information on manpower projections and needs as well as budgetary implications. The Government has set up a pilot scheme, the establishment and staffing control system project for the teaching service, which comprises 90,000 out of the 140,000 public servants, and the system is working very well. Another pilot scheme has been set up in the Ministry of Public Service. This should enable us to make more informed personnel decisions.

Now I turn to remuneration. Remuneration reform is one of the cornerstones of civil service reform, aimed at creating a well-motivated and results-oriented civil service. A number of critical political and economic problems and issues are being tackled in the remuneration reform programme. The solutions to these problems and issues not only require technical and political consideration, but must be matched by quality services that respond to the needs of society. In the quest for a lasting solution, the reform programme is being guided by a policy that aims, first, to make, or to contribute to making, the value of total remuneration more meaningful and transparent as progress is made towards a provisional minimum living wage, a goal we intend to achieve by fiscal year 1996-1997; secondly, to provide more flexibility in determining the appropriate salary structure, based on the importance of contribution and performance through job grading and performance evaluation; thirdly, to improve the equity between employees at the same grade; fourthly, to reduce the scope for abuses; and, fifthly, to provide the basis for more meaningful remuneration comparisons between the civil service and the para-State and private sectors. In this regard, the checklist of recommendations of the Group of Experts is a very useful addition.

As a component of the remuneration policy, non-cash benefits such as transport and housing are being monetized in order to introduce greater transparency and fairness and give employees more choice in using their

income. In addition, administrative overheads are being reduced by privatizing provisional transport and housing.

With regard to staff development, the changes that have been introduced and implemented in the civil service require employees to be versatile, with renewed energy, knowledge, skills and commitment. A training plan has been drawn up, aimed at achieving the immediate skill needs essential for driving forward the reform process to provide the desired new era staff with results-oriented management techniques. The primary objective of the training plan is to provide skills and information technology, communication, managerial and technical training, office records management, staff and team performance appraisal and results-oriented management.

With regard to capacity-building, we believe that the stress should be on both human and institutional capacity and their related fiscal infrastructure. The Government of Uganda, through the National Technical Corporation Assessment programme, has published its policy on technical assistance, which essentially aims at boosting the country's human and institutional capacity to fully exploit all the opportunities that will make it possible for us to become self-reliant in the pursuit of integrated and self-sustaining economic development. Within this context, a large-scale retooling programme in the public sector is desirable, and we seek cooperative efforts in its further development.

I come now to results-oriented management. We plan in the course of this year to introduce into the civil service a results-oriented management (ROM) style which concentrates attention and resources on the achievement of definite measurable objectives within specified time targets. ROM is a strong contrast to the traditional control-based management style, which is characteristic of the civil service in many developing countries. ROM should ultimately lead to higher quality and better service delivery. As a prelude to this, a service delivery survey was recently conducted in a sample number of districts to establish the level of service being delivered to the people, identify best practice and obtain recipients' own opinions about how the service could be best delivered. It is planned that the survey shall become an annual event as a means of institutionalizing the feedback mechanism. The challenges of putting these innovative arrangements in place are enormous, and we will certainly welcome both technical and financial support in the process.

The reports and recommendations before us have helped to widen our horizons and put the issues involved in public administration and development in perspective. We are in a better position to assess our achievements and to gauge how much else remains to be done on a continuing basis. The new development paradigms, the challenges of breaking loose from the shackles of poverty and deprivation and coping with changed national and international circumstances, the precarious transition from crisis situations — all these dictate that we get together and collectively seek innovative solutions.

We have also found the proposals on sub-regional, regional and inter-regional exchanges and sharing of experiences in best practices to be practical and useful. My delegation therefore finds opportune the recommendations for continuous debate to ensure further exchanges of experience and plan future courses of action.

The Acting President: I call on the Permanent Representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): First, I would first like to express my thanks to all those who mobilized to organize today's meeting, in which we are discussing and analysing a subject vital to all our countries: the link between public administration and development. I would also like to express my appreciation for the quality of the documentation that the Secretariat has made available to our delegations for this meeting.

With regard to the subject under debate, I am pleased to point out that the reform and modernization of the public sector in my country are perceived to be one of the foundations of innovations aimed at consolidating the democratic regime on the basis of political pluralism, respect for human rights and strengthening women's rights.

The modernization of the civil service and administrative reform are perceived to be powerful levers that should accompany economic liberalism, the encouragement of private investment, the opening of national economies to the outside, and their anchoring in the world economy. Reshaping the roles of public institutions and achieving greater effectiveness and efficiency in the function and activities of administration constitute the framework within which this transformation must take place.

This means, on the one hand, improving administrative capacity to realize in the field the

economic, social and political objectives of the Government and, on the other, bringing about a reconciliation between the citizen and public services through the establishment of rules based on mutual trust, ready access to services and transparency.

Established policy is based on the following principles: reorganization of the administration; simplification of procedures and formalities; enhancing courteous treatment, information and orientation for the public; modernization of the administration apparatus through informatics and automation; and, finally, reform of the statute of the civil service and maximum utilization of human resources in administration. In this context, Tunisia has accorded priority to a pragmatic approach favouring actions in the field to diagnose inadequacies and to propose concrete measures to remedy them.

The State Secretariat for Administrative Reform and Civil Service, established in 1991, which is responsible for this entire project, was organized as an original structure along the lines of a nucleus from which radiated multidisciplinary working groups charged with achieving specific tasks within a particular time-frame. Each working group comprises a leader and various members chosen for their expertise in the area under study, who continue to work in their administrations or original sectors while supporting the programme of administrative reform in return for token remuneration.

These working groups are composed of businessmen, academics, journalists and civil servants. In addition, representatives of the liberal professions, such as lawyers; national representatives, such as deputies; and local representatives, such as municipal councillors, are also called on to take part in this new arrangement. The participation of representatives of civil society and members of non-governmental organizations concerned with the subject at hand can also enrich the work of the team with their own particular contributions.

Within the framework of this new concept, each team diagnoses and analyses the subject it has been assigned and compares its own conclusions with those drawn from similar experiences in other countries. The programme of administrative reforms has to date involved some 100 workshops, carried out by some 100 multidisciplinary teams, which have dealt with such interesting subjects as private investors, citizens in general, the problems of decentralization and administrative modernization in general. These subjects were examined in the context of the following considerations: the legal framework and incentives for private investment; the creation of economic conditions necessary for the development of private enterprises; the reallocation of the roles of the public and private sectors; and, finally, measures for raising environmental awareness.

With respect to the re-energization of the private sector and its harmonious coexistence with the public sector, we should point out that to create favourable conditions for the promotion of private investment and to encourage the emergence of new entrepreneurs, the Tunisian State has taken vigorous action in the area of financial and tax incentives, as well as in the reallocation of roles between sectors.

A new investment code for Tunisians and foreign nationals came into force in January 1994. This new code confirms the dynamic of liberalization and reinforces the opening of the Tunisian economy to the outside. It has established the principle of freedom to carry out projects without prior authorization. It is now sufficient merely to deposit a declaration of investment with the appropriate services. Foreigners can hold, without prior authorization, up to 100 per cent of project capital.

Other reforms affected the reallocation of roles between the public and private sectors. In 1989 Tunisia had more than 500 public entities. To date, these have been reduced by more than half, to a little over 200. Some 100 public enterprises in the country — 46 per cent — belong to a 10-year privatization programme covering the period 1990 to 1999. This programme of transfer and disengagement by the State was preceded by the restructuring of many enterprises that were in a financially precarious situation. We should also stress that more than three quarters of public industrial and commercial enterprises are operating today in a free market without any protection against competition.

This set of measures, which was designed to guarantee the success and durability of the public administration reforms, have made public control over foreign debt and rigorous financial management of public entities a main focus of the programme of economic restructuring in the country. The policy of financial rigour was implemented by a series of measures designed to stabilize public finances.

In 1990, in parallel to the public-finance reforms, the State undertook a series of reforms to modernize accounting and control systems for various areas of public spending. These reforms have made it possible to

manage public resources better. The budget deficit is today at its lowest level, and in 1996 it will represent less than 2 per cent of gross domestic product. Rigorous management of public finances has also made it possible to have effective control over the country's index of foreign debt, which is now less than 50 per cent of gross domestic product, while debt-servicing is less than 19 per cent of current revenue.

Finally, to guarantee greater effectiveness in the current system of control and proper respect for established standards and rules of management, the State has adopted three main measures: the creation of a high-level committee for administrative and financial control that is linked directly to the office of the President of the Republic, to ensure better planning and coordination in the intervention of control bodies and efficient follow-up to the conclusions of their reports on the management and functioning of public entities; the creation of a system for following-up the conclusions of the annual report of the general accounting office on the management of State services and public enterprises and the recommendations of that high-level body for control of public finances; and the development of an information system for following-up the execution of public projets, to promote both implementation and respect for project plans, as well as to follow up undertakings and payments.

Those reform measures have contributed to strengthening the principles of accountability, transparency and ethics in the management of public services, thereby guaranteeing an integral and sustainable form of development that benefits all without exception.

Administrative reform thus represents the realization of political will at the highest level of Government to place public administration in the service of development and make it an effective tool to transform public and governmental concepts into programmes in the field. This has resulted in complementarity and interaction between various reform efforts, be they political, economic, social or administrative.

As for the contribution of the United Nations to this effort, Tunisia, which has a genuine capacity for identifying and formulating its needs, believes that useful multilateral cooperation could take shape in the following ways: first, assistance for the creation of a training centre, specializing in organizational development and managerial strategies in the public sector, with responsibility for training senior personnel in north African and sub-Saharan countries; secondly, assistance for the implementation of a programme of action for promoting quality in public services in developing countries; thirdly the setting up of a shared database on available expertise in African countries in the field of administration and public management, which would facilitate exchanges of expertise, respond better to the needs of developing countries and reduce the amount of money and time spent in resorting to international expertise; and, fourthly, greater, and more varied forms of assistance from the United Nations Development Programme for governmental administrative reform programmes and for upgrading public services in developing countries.

Tunisia is clearly ready to share with all interested countries its many experiences and the reforms that it has carried out in the field of administrative innovation and modernization of public administration.

The Acting President: I call on Mr. Chung-Hyun Ro, President of the Korea Institute of Public Administration of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Ro (Republic of Korea): It is my great honour and pleasure to address this group of delegates at the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly. Today I would like to share Korea's experience in, and future plans for, public adminstration and development. At this session, I also look forward to learning about the lessons of other countries in the field of public administration.

Korea is rapidly changing as result of industrialization, urbanization and advances in technology, while its public adminstration is facing critical issues of democratization, decentralization and equitable and sustainable development. The Korean people are rightfully reaping the rewards of their economic success: greater social and political freedom.

As the Assembly knows, Korea did not achieve this stage of development without struggle. The Korean war, which lasted for three years, from 1950 to 1953, left the country in ruins and its people separated from their families by the thirty-eighth parallel. During the following 30 years the Korean Government naturally focused on reconstruction, and rapid growth-centred development, while the political struggle of the people continued. It was not until the late 1980s that that struggle set the nation on its inevitable course towards democratization.

On 16 June 1987 the nationwide movement marked its victory over the authoritarian military regime, leading

to the election of the first civilian President in 1992. Yes, it is true that Korea has achieved its economic miracle by focusing on rapid economic development. However, it has not done so without paying a price. Although Korea now has the eleventh largest economy in the world, with a gross national product of $450.5 billion and an annual per capita income of $10,000, in many respects it still has much to strive for.

This is not to say that economic success did not play a critical role in promoting the general welfare of the people and democratization. It is important to remember that our experience has taught us that national development policies should be all-encompassing and balanced, addressing social, political and environmental, as well as economic, issues.

In the absence of a balanced national policy in Korea, the problem of social disparities — not to mention the environment — became acute. Also, as I have mentioned, until recently Korea suffered political oppression. As a result of the national security and economic objectives of the authoritarian regime, the issue of local autonomy was ignored, which in turn hindered the proper development of the nation's politics. In fact, under the Yushin Constitution of 1972, which states that

> "the local council shall not assemble until the reunification of the country",

genuine local autonomy ceased to exist. Now, however, with the strong movement to democratization and a change in national policy focus, the current civilian Government is taking meaningful steps towards addressing social issues, while promoting decentralization.

Last year, President Kim Young Sam made a public statement after the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen, stating that the Government would make a conscious effort to put greater emphasis on social development, with a view to gradually eliminating the problems of social disparity. It was in that spirit that the Government presented a new programme to reform the Korean education system. This programme includes open education, continuing education, learner-centred education and diverse and informative education.

In addition, on 17 June 1995, elections for local council members and executives were held, which revived the spirit of local self-government. The current Government's drive towards decentralization and political freedom is consequently promoting mutual cooperation and dialogue in Korean politics, which is a most important change for those of us in the field of public administration.

Also, in view of the changing political and economic order in the world and in its society, the Korean Government has declared globalization as its new national objective. I am pleased to say that Korea is actively taking measures to transform its economy into a free, global, market-oriented economy through deregulation and the implementation of an incentive system. Meanwhile, considering the potential power and benefit of the information superhighway, Korea's public administration has a great deal of work to do in this regard.

In view of the changes and challenges ahead for public administration, I would like to note here some necessary measures which I believe public adminstration should take so that it can competently and effectively initiate innovative and informative measures to seek globalization, improve the people's quality of life, push through further decentralization and democratization, and conserve the environment.

To this end it is critically important that public administration find a clear direction and define fundamental principles on which to base its actions.

With regard to direction, I believe that Korean public administration should perceive globalization as its objective and prepare itself for the challenges ahead. Meanwhile, its work should be based on a spirit of social equity and justice, which is fundamental for enhancing the quality of people's lives.

In addition, in working to enhance the quality of people's lives, public adminstration must bear in mind that that means all people, including those in North Korea, and humanity in general.

In that regard it is important that we exert our efforts to reverse the current trend in income distribution. According to the United Nations Development Programme, in 1992 the inequity in the world's income distribution was such that the richest 20 per cent of the world's population received 82.7 per cent of world income, while the poorest 20 per cent received only 1.4 per cent. In addition, in order to prevent a further widening of the economic gap between developed and developing countries, it is critically important to seek

globalization with a view to promoting cooperation and mutual benefit, not just competition, among nations.

With respect to the culture of public administration, I hope that while public administration actively recruits and retains competent and talented officials, it will provide them with new, intensive programmes with a view to broadening their views on national and international issues. In this regard, I am confident that Korean public administration will take the necessary measures to change and improve its organization in order to build a better future for its people and for humanity in general.

In conclusion, I would like to express my hope that the United Nations will play a greater role in enhancing the management of public administration in developing countries. I believe that, with its 50 years' experience in the field, the United Nations can make a valuable contribution to improving our understanding of the role of public administration in development. To this end, the United Nations can share its knowledge and continue to promote international cooperation in the field, particularly by promoting meetings in which countries can share their views and experiences.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Zambrano Benítez, National Secretary for Administrative Development of Ecuador.

Mr. Zambrano (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a great honour for me, as representative of the Government of the Republic of Ecuador, to participate in the resumed session of the General Assembly devoted to the subject of public administration and development.

I believe that as part of the efforts being carried out by the United Nations and the Latin American Centre for Development Administration, a forum of this kind offers an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences and approaches. Accordingly, I shall briefly present the most notable aspects of the advances, achievements, obstacles and effects involved in this process.

The Government of Ecuador has laid out a long-term strategy for modernizing the public sector, with a comprehensive scope that can be summed up under three major headings: a policy-oriented view of development; modernization of the State sector; and modernization of public administration.

I shall refer first to the policy-oriented approach to development. Ecuador, like most countries of the region, is facing serious limitations and obstacles to development. For that reason we have embarked on a search for new alternatives that will make it possible to lay a foundation to bring about positive and lasting changes in the quality of life of our population. This means taking advantage of past experiences while adopting a new attitude of change, based on current technical and technological possibilities.

In recent years most of our countries have experienced political democracy coexisting with a partially State-controlled economic regime in which paternalism, monopolistic practices and administrative centralization have proliferated. This has produced an oversized, overactive State apparatus and a suffocating degree of regulation, leading to an administrative culture in which efforts and initiative are unproductively diverted away from, instead of being focused on, the enhancement of national creativity and production.

Various discussions have taken place in an attempt to deal with these limitations. Naturally, these involve a variety of interests and approaches. However, over and above ideological considerations, an economic and social system must provide equality of opportunity, justice, progress, and social mobility so as to make available to the majority of the members of a society the greatest quantity of goods and services in the most efficient and least costly way possible.

We are contemplating activities aimed at strengthening and reorganizing State apparatus, to which end we have been pursuing the following activities. We have institutionalized a public entity that is responsible for providing guidance in the process of modernizing Ecuador, called the National Council for State Modernization. Participants include representatives of the public, private and social sectors of the country. I should mention that we include within the public sector certain broad institutions of Ecuador's public administration — those entrusted with the task of modernizing what we call horizontal public-administration systems, such as the National Secretariat for Administrative Development.

We have been laying a legal foundation that will provide support and binding force to the processes of modernization in two areas: laws of general impact and laws of a specific impact. We have passed two laws of the former. First, the law on State modernization, privatization and provision of public services by the private sector established the scope, coverage and activities of these processes. Secondly, we passed a law on public-sector budgets, which lays down rules for

co-responsibility and simplification in public finance. We are now working on two new sets of rules relating to the law on civil service, administrative careers and compensation, the purpose of which is to regulate the management of human capital in the public sector. We are also working on a law dealing with procurement, the purpose of which is to simplify procedures and paperwork for public contracts.

In more specific areas several laws have already been adopted, or exist in draft form, which seek to make viable specific processes of modernization in particular areas. Several advances have been achieved in modernizing the State, of which I shall highlight the following.

We have concluded the process of privatizing Ecuadorian Airlines, and we believe that it will soon be flying again.

We have adopted a law reforming the special law on telecommunications. It provides a legal foundation for promoting a true transformation of the telecommunications sector in Ecuador. In this context, we also contracted specialized consultancy services to plan the development and expansion of this sub-sector; the technological requirements for modernizing it; the economic and financial evaluation of the company that provides these services in Ecuador, known as EMETEL, and the development of a framework of legal regulations.

Before the end of the first quarter of 1996, we will conclude the public bidding for the concession of port services, and in the meantime a far-reaching administrative reorganization of the bodies responsible for port administration is being carried out. This reorganization has already yielded its first positive results, with a reduction of unnecessary personnel and the creation of management and investment-monitoring units.

We have introduced a set of measures aimed at modernizing customs administration, of which the following should be highlighted: procedures for granting concessions to private companies for random physical inspections and temporary storage of goods; the elimination of inspections of imports under special regimes; the elimination of tariff-setters and customer inspectors; the creation of automated databases for customs investigations and the comprehensive automation of our customs system through a satellite-communications system; and the professionalization of new customs officials.

In the sub-sector for roads, construction, maintenance and repair are being contracted out to private companies. The National Congress is currently considering the new law governing the electrical sub-sector, and the process of granting a concession for the construction and operation of the Toachi-Pilatón hydroelectric plant is now in its final stages.

The present Government has certainly been encountering powerful resistance to the modernization of the sub-sectors of public administration, born out of professional and trade union interests and lack of understanding of the challenges of the modern world. However, close to the end of the present Administration, perhaps the most important achievement is the increasing awareness of the need to modernize the public sector and create foundations for those processes. It will be up to the next Government to maintain these efforts and to capitalize on them.

The modernization of public administration, in its own context, is geared towards improving capacities for planning, guidance, management, control and evaluation of governmental activity. It therefore constitutes a cornerstone for increasing normative and operational capacities, whether or not these efforts are pursued under different political orientations.

At first sight these modernization activities may not have such a great impact as those in the other two contexts, but their maximum benefit is that they aim to provide a true capacity for response by the Government so that it may attend efficiently to the demands of society in increasingly globalized economies. However, to bring about a true modernization in forms of management, we felt it was important to apply an approach that would enable us in the first instance to focus on key areas of governmental action, and from there to spread modernization efforts towards other areas of activity.

These points have to do not with their economic, social or political importance, but, rather, with their general observance in public administration — that is, they constitute common factors in the various public sectors and institutions. Accordingly, under the auspices of the World Bank, with the Technical Assistance Project for Modernization of the State, known as Project MOSTA, the processes of change in public administration in Ecuador are oriented under so-called horizontal public administration systems, within keeping with Ecuador's administrative reality, five main areas of action.

The first covers public finance systems pertaining to improvement of taxation activities, budgetary and treasury matters, governmental accounting and public credit. Modernization of these systems is the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

The second area of action is in planning systems, with reference to development planning and public investment. Modernization of these systems falls to the General Planning Secretariat.

The National Secretariat for Administrative Development is responsible for the modernization of the third area of action: administration systems for human capital and institutional strengthening.

Fourthly, the systems for control of the use of public resources are the responsibility of the State Comptroller-General.

Lastly, automated information systems, which are required by the systems to which I have referred, fall to the Coordinating Unit of the SENDA — National Administration Secretariat — project.

In order to ensure harmony and compatibility of these various activities in different areas, the Coordinating Unit is located in the National Council for Modernization (CONAM), with the participation of coordinators from all of the public institutions I have mentioned, accountable directly to the senior officials of their institutions, coordinated and supervised by a well-defined technical coordinating unit established jointly by the authorities of CONAM and the World Bank.

Since the goals of the modernization of the public sector that we in Ecuador are pursuing are quite ambitious, we believe that our public institutions will become fully part of the modernization process, in order to be in tune with the times and with history, and in fulfilment of the natural law that in our Universe change and movement are the basis of the existence of all things.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.